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Prevention Information from CSAP's Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies

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Q&A on Prevention Certification

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CSAP's Western CAPT coordinators are often approached with questions about prevention certification due to a growing interest in the professionalization of the substance abuse prevention field. The following are answers to some of the most common questions that emerge as people begin their quest into what certification is all about.

What is prevention certification?

Numerous states across the nation have put into place prevention certification processes. Most of these states require a passing score on the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium's (IC&RC) national certification examination, along with a minimum level of experience and training in the prevention field. Some states have multiple levels of prevention certification while others only have one level. In the Western Region of the United States, only the states of Oregon and Idaho currently have active prevention certification processes. Furthermore, each of these states has only one level of certification.

How do I get certified?

A national prevention certification process does not exist. Consequently, you must apply for certification through one of the state prevention certification boards. If your state does not have a prevention certification board, you can contact one

that does and ask if you can apply through that state's board. Many states with a certification board will allow out-of-state residents to apply through it.

What minimum amount of experience and training is required?

Each state certification board determines the requirements for prevention certification in its state. However, if state boards are members of ICRC, then the following are the *minimum* standards that must be met:

- 120 hours of supervised experience, with a minimum of 10 hours in each of five domains: planning and evaluation; education and skill development; community organization; public and organizational policy; and professional growth
- One year (2,000 hours) of substance abuse prevention experience
- 100 hours of prevention training (50 hours specific to ATOD)
- Passing score on the ICRC Prevention Specialist Written Examination
- Adherence to a prevention *Code of Ethics* and 6 education hours in ethics
- 40 hours of continuing education every two years for re-certification

Many state certifications add additional requirements to the above standards.

Who can I contact for more information?

You can find information on the Addiction Counselor Certification Board of Oregon at <http://www.accbo.com/CPS.htm> or (503) 231-8164. For Idaho, the Idaho Board of Alcoholism/Drug Counselor Certification can be reached at (208) 395-1078. Finally, the IC&RC web site, <http://icrcaoda.org/>, can provide additional information, including a list of the states that have prevention certification.

The six regional CAPTs are funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. For more information on this Tip of the CAPT or other Western CAPT services, please visit our web site: www.westcapt.org or our best practices website: www.open.org/westcapt.

Our toll-free office number is: (888) 734-7476